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No other sites visited revealed stones. Informants stated that during early missionary days, the stones were removed to build a causeway across the taro swamp, to make walls for stone houses, and to burn for lime, which, mixed with sand, provided the mortar for the new stone houses.

The pattern of low-walled, oval or circular religious enclosures with a central stone representation of a god is an unusual development in Polynesia and recalls the structures that Gill described for Niutao in the Ellice Islands which he visited in 1872. Gill mentions that the stone representative of the god Tangaloa was a plain upright slab. The religious structure adjoined the burial ground (a common Pukapukan pattern) and consisted of "an oval low enclosure, composed of flat stones, some higher than others, each representing a distinct divinity, so that the sacred men standing inside the enclosure—the people of course outside—could worship all the gods at once" (12,p.14). It is unfortunate for comparative study that Gill did not particularize these religious enclosures in more detail.

Commemorative stones, marking the shrine of an ancestor god on a sacred clearing (*pionga*), consisted of a single upright stone set in the ground, or else several stones set on edge to form a rectangular structure two or more feet square, the enclosure being filled in with coral gravel. This type of commemorative shrine was similar to the seats (*potu*) of the priests in the god house (*uale atua*) and also to the low seat that was set before the stone representative of the god on the religious structure.

Graves

Formerly each cemetery was surrounded by a low, rectangular wall (*paepae*) of coral stones which demarcated the area set aside by the people of a lineage as their burial place. The area varied in size according to the numerical size of the lineage. Most of these walls have fallen into decay, but are observable on some cemeteries removed from the village. The stones are about 3 inches above ground and are undressed coral of different lengths and thicknesses.

Outside these walls are observable the stone *paepae* that marked the foundations of old houses of mourning (*uale matenga*). On one foundation are still seen the holes into which the wall posts of the house fitted; on another, rotting wooden posts from the dismantled house are lying on the foundation.

Within each cemetery, the graves are of three types: the modern Christian, enclosed, boxlike grave; the rectangular, open grave accorded formerly to people of rank; and the two-stone grave accorded formerly to commoners (pl.2,B).

Former custom was to bury with head to the east, feet to the west. Graves of chiefs (*ulihi uale* and *uui aliki*) were marked by eight stones—two at the head, two at

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764 575 the feet, and two at each side; the grave of an executive peace officer (*yale*) was marked by eight stones—two at the head, three at the right (north) side, two at the left (south) side, and one at the feet; the grave of the executive officer or "prime minister" (*uele*) was marked by seven stones—two at the head, two at each side, and one at the feet; the grave of a close relative of the chief was marked by five stones—two at the head, and one at the sides and feet. Graves of commoners (distant relatives in the chief's lineage) were marked by a single headstone and a footstone. Burials of these undistinguished people were side by side, a few inches separating each headstone and footstone in a long grave. Thus over a grave 24 feet long, 8 feet wide, is a row of stones indicating that at least 16 people were buried side by side.

The gravestones of commoners are undressed coral, laid on the side, 6 inches to a foot wide and about 6 inches above ground. Gravestones of chiefs vary in size; an average stone is about 30 inches high, 15 inches wide, and 3 inches thick. The surfaces of all graves are covered with fine white coral gravel.

764 554 Much confusion exists among informants as to whether gravestones of particular shape or material were chosen to serve as signs of personal skills or peculiarities of the deceased:

[826] Vai, for instance, finds that formerly it was common to use hard *hanapaa* coral conglomerate for a man's gravestone, softer *pango* coral for a woman's, symbolizing a cultural attitude that deaths of men are hard, those of women soft. He knew of no custom of symbolizing individual peculiarities. Another informant, Te Apo, suggested that formerly it was not unusual to mark the grave of a particularly expert fisherman with a stone whose top was bifurcated like a fish tail (pl. 2,B). If no naturally shaped stone was found, a stone might be roughly cut to serve the purpose; the grave of a champion (*toa*) at sports might be marked by a very large triangular stone. Pua made the most consistent, though at times confused, attempt to suggest a more elaborate symbolism for curiously shaped stones. According to him, the grave of an adult man was marked by coral stones laid on their sides about 9 inches above ground; that of a woman by stones on their sides, about 5 inches above ground; that of a child by smaller stones. If a man had two wives, he had two headstones, the children of his first marriage being buried to the left of one headstone, those of his second marriage to the right of the other headstone. The grave of a champion was marked by a tall stone, that of an expert fisherman by a stone with a naturally indented top, that of a priest by a naturally shaped stone that resembled a priest's headdress.

Contrary to these rationalizations, ordinary folk belief has no knowledge that gravestones are anything but rough, unpolished stones (*unu taahinahina*), chosen for the deceased according to the fancy of the survivors. This attitude suggests that the practice of selecting stones to symbolize personal qualities of the deceased was a matter of personal whim rather than an accepted pattern of Pukapukan behavior. It is unlikely that acceptance of Christianity would militate against the memory or observance of such a custom if it was formerly in vogue, because death customs are tenacious even in a society subject to rapid change and because it is common Christian practice to engrave on gravestones particulars of a deceased person's abilities and character. In spite, therefore, of individual beliefs about the symbolism of gravestones, it is probably correct to assume that few people bothered to select stones to which symbolisms might be attached.

764 A number of separate graves on the atoll provide variation on the common type of burial stonework:

The grave of the Tongan warrior Tangiloa, on the boundary between Tuto and Loto villages, is a separate grave apart from the nearest lineage cemetery. It consists of 10 stones (originally 11), forming a rectangle 6 feet by 5 feet. Two stones form the east end of the grave, three the west end, three the south side, and two the north side. All

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The *lopa*, *tane*, and *wawine* carried out much of the economic and social activity of the community. The *matuaka* generally directed group activities by virtue of their experience. Their advice was also listened to with respect in informal village meetings, and they took the lead in organized village work. The *tupole*, the most important group in the political organization and control of the island as a whole, formed a sort of island council, which, with the chief, governed the island both politically and economically. Each old man lived with his wife and family in his own village but was relieved from the necessity of providing himself with food; the *tupole* were supported by the community, by gifts of taio from the women and by fish caught by the men's *tangaga* fishing group.

All gatherings and meetings of the old men were held at the *omaga* (*malae*) *no te tupole*, a meeting place formerly situated in Loto village, to the east of the church and to the right of the present road, a site now occupied by houses. The old men might gather at their meeting place each day or several times a week, depending on the business to be transacted and the amount of food to be divided. The number of old men varied from year to year, ranging from 10 to 30. The lowest number on record is six.

There was no special time for the accession to the group of new *tupole*. When a man was sufficiently old and grey, he formally joined the group; his accession might be marked by a small food division among the *tupole* themselves.

It is related that long before the time of Tuivu (nine generations ago), the number of old men was increased to include younger men. The younger people were idle and turned their idleness to mischief in working off personal spites and jealousies against still younger adults (*lopa* and *tane*) by withholding food divisions and then resorting to violence when the young men objected. (See p. 391.) Tuivu initiated reforms providing that no man might become a *tupole* until he was so old as to be unfit for active work. *Tupole* were therefore so feeble physically that their children had often to carry them to the meetings of the group.

The oldest man of the *tupole* group functioned as their leader. He became the right-hand man of the high chief (*aliki nuia*) by virtue of his experience and age and was then called the *nuia*. The nuia was both the spokesman of the chief and the mouthpiece of the people. In addition, he had special priestly powers, and communicated with the major gods of the island on the religious structure of the lineage of the chief. This power was vested in him irrespective of his own lineage membership.

Chieftainship

Status and rank grades in Pukapukan society were not highly developed. The superior chief of the island was *te aliki nuia o Te Ulu-o-te-motu* (the major chief of Head-of-the-stone, Pukapuka). The subordinate chiefs were

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te uwi ariki (the many chiefs). The remainder of the community were without rank and were simply called *te kau* or *te tama* (the people or the children). The chief's executive (*wola*) was next in rank to the supreme chief, but his position was not hereditary. Informants stated that each of the several subordinate chiefs had an executive (*wola*) to advise him. These sub-executives were the oldest men (*tupuna*) of the several villages and chiefly lineages and shared priestly functions with the minor chiefs whom they served. It is possible, however, that informants were unconsciously magnifying the former status of minor chiefs in order to glorify their own lineages; or else they were generalizing about the status of these chiefs in terms of a particular historical set-up when a minor chief may have assumed some of the powers which properly belonged solely to the supreme chief of the island.

Another ranking official sometimes spoken of was the *yuta*, a name which appears only in connection with Tuiva, who acted as a sort of regent or supreme head of the island during an interregnum in the line of the high chief. It is possible, however, that the *yuta* was formerly a high-ranking peace officer, deputy to the chief, without priestly functions. Informants are unclear as to his position at times other than during the regency of Tuiva.

The chiefly set-up in former times varied from that of today. Formerly, probably up to the time of white contact, the chiefs of the island were:

Village	Paternal Lineage	Chiefs
Ngake	Mafiwata	One ariki (chief), one langatila (sub-chief)
	Matanga	One ariki, one langatila
Loto	i Tuai	One ariki wolo (supreme chief), one langatila
	Tangaipuka	One langatila
Yato	Yalongo	One ariki, one langatila
	Yamanga	One langatila
	Yayi	One langatila

This gives a total of one supreme chief, three other chiefs, and seven sub-chiefs. The number of sub-chiefs (*langatila*) may at times have been larger, because a powerful paternal sub-lineage could well have claimed the right to nominate its own minor chiefs. No record survives to enable this question to be settled. With white contact and the control of the island by a resident agent and nominated council, changes have been made in the number and names of the chiefs. The Cook Islands term *mataiapo* has been introduced as a name for the minor chief. The present set-up includes one supreme chief (*ariki wolo*), seven other chiefs (*mataiapo*), and four sub-chiefs (*langatila*):

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Village	Paternal Lineage	Chiefs
Ngake	Maliwutu	Two mataiapo, one langatila
	Matanga	Two mataiapo
Loto	i Tua	One aliki wolo, one langatila
	Yangalipule	One mataiapo
Yato	Yalongo	Two mataiapo
	Yamanga	Two langatila

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Informants are confused today over the former status of the high chief and the other chiefs. The following description seems to have applied both to the high chief and to the chiefs of the other lineages; it excludes the sub-chiefs (*langatila*) who seem to have been more executive officers of the major chiefs than chiefs with status in their own right. Some informants believed that the chiefs were regarded as the fathers of the people and were approached by anyone at any time without ceremony or violation of tapu; that they were tapu only when they visited the sacred structures (*omonga*) of their lineage gods to seek some favor from the gods.

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Majority opinion holds, however, that the chief was sacred from the time he was inducted into office on the sacred structure of his lineage. During youth and boyhood, he, like his siblings, was without tapu and mixed freely with the other young people of the island. The personal conduct of the chief was above criticism. Should anyone dare to reproach him, he cursed the impertinent one with the power of his lineage gods and caused him to fall sick.

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The house of the chief was divided into two parts. There was no formal dividing wall or screen, but the division was well understood by the chief's family. On one side slept the chief and his wife; on the other side, his children and other household members. His house was not more pretentious than other houses of the village, but was of the ordinary *nakoyomoa* house type with coconut leaf wall screens. The chief entered from any side, but the family might enter only from their own end of the house. The chief ate with the rest of the household. His clothes were made by the women of the household. His old malos and sleeping mats were thrown into the sea, because they had become tapu through contact with his body. There were special death observances for the chief (p. 302).

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In front of the chief's house was a reserved open place where he rested. Only the name of the resting place of the supreme chief is remembered. It was called Te Ulu-takapau and was situated in front of the present supreme chief's residence in Loto, covering part of the present road and adjacent land. The chief had a reserved bathing beach; that of the supreme chief was in front of Te Ulu-takapau, and was called Te Ava-o-te-waka-takelenga-aliki (Channel-for-the-chief's-bathing). At this beach, which includes the only piece of deep water on the lagoon frontage of Loto village,

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